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# Criticism of Israel Rises Over Pollard Spy Case

*Promotion of Agent's Alleged 'Handler' Hit*

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U.S. criticism of the Israeli government's handling of the Jonathan Jay Pollard spy case escalated yesterday, with tough statements from two senior members of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and a State Department declaration questioning Israeli cooperation in the case.

The Reagan administration statement criticized the Israeli government for assigning Col. Aviem Sella—indicted by the U.S. government Tuesday as Pollard's first "handler"—to command a large air base near Tel Aviv.

"The United States government believes that the promotion or re-assignment to a position of major responsibility of any Israeli involved in violation of U.S. espionage laws is inconsistent with the spirit of cooperation in which we have wanted to proceed with the government of Israel in the Pollard affair," State Department spokesman Phyllis Oakley said.

Oakley added that U.S. officials will not deal with Sella. "It is U.S. policy that American officials abroad do not have contacts with any individuals who are under indictment for violating U.S. espionage laws," she said.

Another State Department spokesman said the air base is considered "the most prestigious command" in the Israeli air force and Sella's assignment there was in conflict with Israeli government assurances that Israelis involved in the Pollard case would be "called to account."

Pollard, a former Navy intelligence analyst, pleaded guilty last year to passing thousands of pages of top secret documents to Sella

and other Israeli embassy employees. He was sentenced yesterday to life in prison.

On Capitol Hill, meanwhile, Reps. Dick Cheney (R-Wyo.) and Henry J. Hyde (R-Ill.) said yesterday that they didn't believe Israeli government claims that the Pollard case was a "rogue operation" that was unknown to high-level Israeli officials.

Cheney and Hyde, who also are members of the House select committee investigating the Iran-contra affair, said they felt colleagues in Congress also were concerned about the Pollard case, but they didn't expect anyone would propose cutting the \$3 billion annual U.S. aid package to Israel.

"I don't think it [the Pollard case] was a rogue operation," Cheney said at a breakfast meeting in answer to a question on how the Iran-contra affair and the Pollard case would affect U.S.-Israeli relations. "I think it was a major, very successful penetration of the U.S. government and our intelligence agencies by the Israeli government . . . behavior that doesn't behoove an ally. I don't think we've heard the last of it."

Later Cheney said, "On the one hand, Israel pleads a special relationship with the United States. On the other hand, they run a major intelligence operation against us. There isn't much they couldn't get if they asked for it. But they chose not to do it that way. And I think the Israeli government ought to know that some of us are deeply concerned about that kind of conduct."

However, Cheney said that "It wouldn't be in our national interest to significantly reduce aid levels just because the Israelis made a dumb mistake."



REP. DICK CHENEY  
... doubts Pollard was "rogue"

Hyde said at the meeting that the Iran-contra affair showed Israel shouldn't be considered "our 51st state" and that Reagan administration officials were naive to accept Israeli intelligence about Iranian moderates at face value.

Afterward, he said he agreed with Cheney's appraisal. "I think Pollard is what he is: a spy in the pay of the Israeli government, and that's really outrageous from one of your closest allies. It's something that requires a lot more than the brushoff it's given."

Hyde added that he didn't think there would be any move in Congress to cut aid to Israel.

Israeli Embassy spokesman Yossi Gal said his government stood by its statement that the Pollard case was unauthorized.

In another development, Gal confirmed that the Canadian government told his embassy yesterday—without giving a reason—that it was refusing to provide credentials for Gen. Amos Yaron as the Israeli military attache in Ottawa.

Yaron was in command of Israeli troops in Beirut in 1982 at the time of the Sabra and Shatilla massacres of Palestinian refugees. He was relieved of his command after an Israeli government inquiry.